

deepest appreciation for sharing this outstanding soldier and humanitarian with us. Ben was a true national hero, and his many contributions made significant and lasting impacts throughout the world. You may be justifiably proud of his contributions which extend above and beyond the call of duty.

REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I am deeply concerned by the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the eastern and northeastern regions of the Democratic Republic of Congo. In the east, the FDLR rebels have deliberately and brutally targeted civilians in response to a new military offensive, while the Congolese military—an undisciplined force now including several former militias—has also targeted civilians with killings, rapes, and looting amidst ongoing operations. Last week, a coalition of 84 humanitarian agencies released a report stating that more than 1,000 civilians have been killed and nearly 900,000 displaced in eastern Congo since January. In addition, the United Nations reports that there have been over 5,000 cases of rape in South Kivu Province in the first 6 months of this year alone, and that number is increasing. With the offensive continuing and the onset of the dry season, the level of violence is likely to increase in the months ahead.

Meanwhile, Doctors without Borders reported last week that hundreds of thousands of people in northeastern Congo are fleeing from renewed attacks by the Lord's Resistance Army. For two decades, the LRA operated in northern Uganda and southern Sudan, but they have shifted their base of operations in recent years into northeastern Congo. This year, facing renewed pressure from a cross-border Ugandan military offensive, the LRA have scaled up their attacks on civilians, killing an estimated 1,200 Congolese and abducting 1,500 in the first 6 months alone. Ongoing Ugandan military operations have reportedly had some success, but the LRA leader Joseph Kony continues to evade capture and his forces exploit the region's porous borders. The Congolese military has deployed new forces to the northeast, but their inability to protect civilians from the LRA and their own abuses against civilians have only made things worse.

Over the last decade, the people of eastern Congo have already lived through violent conflict and humanitarian crisis. According to the best estimates, more than 5.4 million people have been killed, making this the single deadliest conflict since the Second World War. Millions have been displaced from their homes, forced to live in squalid conditions. Women and girls and even some men and boys in the Congo have endured horrific levels of sexual violence. Yet, rather than coming to an end of this nightmare, I am worried that Congo is now entering an-

other chapter of it. Without a clear and viable plan for civilian protection, continuing military operations and deployments will likely lead to further reprisal attacks by armed groups and greater displacement. At the same time, without real progress to demilitarize the economy and reform the Congolese military, any security gains are likely to be short-lived.

I was very pleased that Secretary Clinton chose to travel to eastern Congo during her trip to Africa in August and pledged \$17 million in new funds to address the sexual violence there. I also know the State Department has been exploring ways to build on her historic visit. And last week, the United States hosted meetings with our European and U.N. partners under the auspices of the Great Lakes Contact Group to discuss our collective efforts going forward. This is all well and good. I hope the international community will take immediate steps to bolster civilian protection and humanitarian access in both the east and northeast. But as we go forward, we also need to finally get serious about pressing regional governments to address the underlying causes of the conflict: the continued plunder and militarized trade of eastern Congo's rich mineral base, the region's porous and unregulated borders, outside support of armed groups, and the lack of accountability and discipline in the Congolese army.

Addressing these issues will not be easy. But continuing to rely on half-measures and focusing on the symptoms offer little hope of ending Congo's crises. It is time for a comprehensive and concerted international effort toward the Congo and the Great Lakes Region of Africa, and I am confident that there is no better administration in recent history to lead such an effort. President Obama has already demonstrated his commitment to and understanding of this issue with his work on the DRC Relief, Security and Democracy Promotion Act of 2006. Secretary Clinton was reportedly the most senior U.S. Government official to ever visit eastern Congo. And finally, Johnnie Carson is perhaps the most experienced Assistant Secretary for African Affairs that we have ever had. Together, we have an opportunity to reverse the trends and address Congo's crises—both in the east and with the LRA—and I hope we will seize it. For Africa, few achievements could be more important for the sake of regional stability and saving lives.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF UNION MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

• Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, it is my great pleasure today to congratulate the Union Missionary Baptist Church on its 100th anniversary. This wonderful church was the first African-

American Baptist church in Lansing, established by a small group of worshippers meeting in a living room. In 2001, the congregation built a Family Life Center, which ministers to the community with classrooms, a computer lab, a chapel, a prayer garden, and a commercial kitchen. The congregation today consists of over 700 members.

The church has been blessed by excellent leadership over the years. The first pastor was Rev. H.C. Randolph, who was succeeded by many other distinguished pastors over the years, including Rev. G.W. Carr, Rev. J.G. Bruce, Rev. S.L. Johnson, Rev. Norris Jackson, Rev. Joel L. King (uncle of Dr. Martin Luther King), Rev. Charles J. Patterson, and the current pastor, a wonderful leader and a dear friend, Rev. Melvin T. Jones.

Throughout its great history, Union Missionary Baptist Church has enriched the lives of thousands of people who have come through its doors to worship. It has been my privilege to work with Reverend Jones over the years. He and his church truly reflect what Paul urged of the Galatians: "Whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all." I congratulate Reverend Jones and the congregation, and I look forward to participating in the church's centennial celebrations.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:37 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3319. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 440 South Gullwing Street in Portola, California, as the "Army Specialist Jeremiah Paul McCleery Post Office Building".

H.R. 3763. An act to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act to provide for an exclusion from Red Flag Guidelines for certain businesses.

H.R. 3819. An act to extend the commercial space transportation liability regime.

At 1:58 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1818. An act to amend the Morris K. Udall Scholarship and Excellence in National Environmental and Native American Public Policy Act of 1992 to honor the legacy of Stewart L. Udall, and for other purposes.

At 3:52 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1793. An act to amend title XXVI of the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend the program for providing life-saving care for those with HIV/AIDS.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, without amendment: